BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

# SHEFFIELD

## PRIDE OF PLACE PROSPECTUS

## 2025-2035

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This brochure sets out proposed action in three key theme areas:

- Economy
- Social Mobility
- Infrastructure

Each of these themes is directly supported by related Sheffield City Goals and our 'Asks' to Government.

To learn more about the Sheffield City Goals, see page 10.





# FOREWORD

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## SHEFFIELD IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The Sheffield Pride of Place Partnership is pleased to share this Prospectus, detailing our vision for Sheffield.

We are a growing collective of Sheffield's businesses, educators and community organisations, working in partnership with Sheffield City Council, facilitated by Business in the Community.

Together, we are committed to:

- unlocking Sheffield's economic potential by accelerating the growth of Sheffield's businesses and ideas
- providing opportunities for local people to gain skills fit for the future, access pathways to training and employment, and boost social mobility in our city
- continually improving Sheffield's infrastructure to underpin these ambitions, securing a connected city where everybody can access opportunities through excellent transport, digital infrastructure, and climate adaptation and resilience.

Our Partnership builds on the work of Sheffield Business Together, which for five years has helped to harness the expertise, skills and resources of Sheffield's businesses to offer practical support for local communities.

Every member cares deeply about our city and knows that the complexities facing our communities are ever-changing, and often rooted in historic challenges.

That's why our work builds on what Sheffield already knows. This Prospectus is designed to show how businesses can drive positive transformation in line with Sheffield's City Goals and Growth Plan – set out by the City Council in 2024-25.

Our work is also built on Sheffield's strengths as a welcoming, innovative, and inspiring city where communities work together and good ideas flourish.

We want to add value to plans that have been made by Sheffield, for Sheffield, helping to attract more investment and flying the flag not just for our city centre, but for all neighbourhoods and communities within the city's seven hills. We will do this by leveraging our unique strengths in advanced manufacturing, green industries, and cultural vibrancy, helping to create a city where everyone has access to opportunity.

In this document, we set out our vision for Sheffield in 2035 and show how you can be part of its future success.

**Business in the Community's Pride of Place programme brings together businesses, civic leadership and local communities, creating innovative change across the UK. Since its inception in 2016, The Pride of Place programme has had an impact in 18 places to date, with a mission to support communities in 50 places by 2032.**

## Signed by

Tim Roberts
*CEO, Henry Boot and Leadership Board Chair*

Kate Josephs CB
*Chief Executive Sheffield City Council*

# WELCOME TO SHEFFIELD

© Street Art Video

This is Sheffield. A city whose energy and industry built the world and gave it the 'beautiful game'. Where culture breathes and artists capture the moments of generations. A city in a national park where tree lined streets and urban parks blend grey with green. A city that has changed the world and offered sanctuary to many. Put simply, a city that inspires.

Approximately *550,000 people call Sheffield home*. We are a Core City with one of the UK's most unique and dynamic urban centres and *an economy valued at £15.7b*.

From our roots as a market town to a hard-earned global reputation as a city that inspires, Sheffield has always been a place that makes things. Whether pioneering stainless steel and cutlery, to today's innovations in advanced manufacturing and green technologies, or our award-winning cultural offer Sheffield is a city defined by its resilience, creativity, and ability to adapt.

We are the only city in the UK with an officially recognised "Made in [City]" brand. While other regions protect single products, only Sheffield carries a mark that represents the quality and heritage of an entire city's manufacturing. Overseen by the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire, the *"Made in Sheffield" brand* continues to symbolise world-class craftsmanship, innovation, and global reputation.

This spirit of innovation, reinvention, and opportunity is embodied by world-leading research assets. Sites such as the Heart of the City and the University of Sheffield's Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre attract global investment and position Sheffield as a leader in cutting-edge industries.

Yet, Sheffield is about much more than its industrial heritage. The lifeblood of our city is our people, our culture, our natural assets, and our strong sense of community. Below we set out some of Sheffield's unique opportunities and strengths, while highlighting some of the key challenges facing our local communities.

**"Core Cities UK is an alliance of 12 cities - Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield. Its mission is to unlock the full potential of the UK's great city regions to create a stronger, fairer economy and society."**

**Heart of the City is a transformative city centre regeneration project that has created 1.5 million square feet of space throughout new sustainable, repurposed & retained buildings. Alongside retail and leisure outlets, the new central business district brings a diverse mix of workspaces, from Grade A offices to studios & maker space.**

© Doug Bates Photography

## LOCAL HOTSPOTS

As the first Olympic Legacy Park to ever be established outside a host city, *Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park* continues to develop as a key asset for the city with world-class amenities. The Park – easily accessible via Sheffield's Supertram and our increasingly viable active travel routes – provides opportunities to improve wellbeing, stay active, enjoy green space, and access employment and education opportunities. It reflects the transformation that continues apace in Attercliffe, an area steeped in Sheffield's industrial history. Sheffield City Council's Attercliffe Regeneration Framework sets out potential plans for 3,000 new homes and 1,500 new jobs in the area over the next 10-15 years.

> I moved to Sheffield 29 years ago from London and I haven't looked back. I fell in love with the rich and visible culture of the city, the outstanding teaching and learning at both Universities, the stability of its diverse communities and, more importantly, the magical nature of the Peak District. Sheffield is the best place to raise a family; it is safe and welcoming and open for business.
>
> **Olivier Tsemeo, CEO, SADACCA**

# SHEFFIELD'S OPPORTUNITIES

Sheffield stands at a pivotal moment in its history, evolving into a beacon of opportunity shaped by advanced manufacturing, health-tech innovation, a vibrant entrepreneurial spirit, and a proud, diverse cultural identity. By harnessing these strengths, Sheffield is attracting investment to help its businesses grow, create new pathways for skilled employment, and ensure every resident has the chance to thrive in their safe, vibrant, welcoming city. But there is much more to be achieved, and our unique assets can play a key role in this journey:

- The University of Sheffield's translation research assets, which includes the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC), are global leaders in aerospace, automotive, and engineering innovation, anchoring Sheffield's reputation for cutting-edge industry.
- The Olympic Legacy Park exemplifies Sheffield's ambition, blending sport, health, and education in a vibrant hub. With state-of-the-art facilities and leading institutions like the English Institute of Sport, the park fosters healthier communities, tackles health inequalities, and acts as a powerful catalyst for inclusive regeneration. Housing is more affordable than 75% of UK cities, and among the most affordable of the UK's Core Cities.
- Alongside this, the city's burgeoning health-tech sector, supported by facilities such as the Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre (AWRC) at Sheffield Hallam University and the Centre for Assistive Technology and Connected Healthcare (Insigneo) at the University of Sheffield, are driving advancements in medical devices, diagnostics, and health data analytics, improving health outcomes while spurring economic growth.
- Sheffield's knowledge economy is flourishing, with two exceptional universities - the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University - at the forefront of fundamental and applied research in engineering, digital technologies, life sciences, and clean energy. This positions the city to attract high-growth industries and global partnerships, driving innovation-led economic expansion and the growth of high-value jobs across the region. 42.9% of residents have higher-level qualifications (Level 4 and above).

## AT A GLANCE:

Housing is more affordable than 75% of UK cities, and among the most affordable of the UK's Core Cities

42.9% of residents have higher-level qualifications (Level 4 and above)

Sheffield has the largest amount of industrial floorspace among Northern city regions

"The Outdoor City" offers residents and visitors access to over 700 green spaces

Sheffield is consistently rated as one of the best cities in the UK to raise a family

In Yorkshire and the Humber, it is estimated that the new circular-economy jobs could represent over 40% of the currently unemployed workforce by 2035 if an ambitious and transformational policy is pursued





- Sheffield's diverse range of SMEs form the backbone of the local economy, and are well-placed to expand international trade, strengthen supply chains, and drive economic growth. Sheffield has the largest amount of industrial floorspace among Northern city regions.
- Sheffield's cultural vibrancy further enriches its identity. Iconic music acts like Arctic Monkeys, Pulp, and Self Esteem have put the city on the global stage, while institutions such as Sheffield Theatres (the largest theatre network outside London), Millenium Gallery, and Yellow Arch Studios highlight its creative spirit. Together, these assets create a city that blends urban dynamism with natural beauty.
- As the second greenest city in the world and set against the breathtaking backdrop of the Peak District National Park, Sheffield is celebrated as "The Outdoor City," offering residents and visitors access to over 700 green spaces, supporting positive health and wellbeing while enhancing the city's appeal as a place to live and work.
- Investments in green infrastructure, sustainable transport, and digital connectivity are creating the foundations for future growth. By prioritising digital inclusion, Sheffield is bridging the digital divide, empowering residents to access education, employment, and essential services, and driving social mobility. Sheffield is consistently rated as one of the best cities in the UK to raise a family.
- Sheffield's heritage of decarbonisation, from pioneering one of the UK's first district heating networks that is now being expanded via a partnership between E.ON and Amey, puts the city at the heart of South Yorkshire's recognised green and clean tech cluster. The 2026 Business and Economy Decarbonisation Routemap brings opportunities to attract investment, drive innovation, and accelerate sustainable growth. In Yorkshire and the Humber, it is estimated that the new circular-economy jobs could represent over 40% of the currently unemployed workforce by 2035 if an ambitious and transformational policy is pursued.

By aligning with Sheffield's City Goals and Growth Plan, we aim to amplify Sheffield's ambitions by mobilising the business community and supporting local and regional leadership to step confidently into a bright future.

> As someone who has lived in Burngreave, Sheffield means community, resilience, and belonging. This area shows the true spirit of the city, with neighbours from all walks of life coming together, sharing culture, supporting one another, and creating opportunities for the next generation. Burngreave reflects Sheffield's strength: diverse, vibrant, and always finding hope in each other.
>
> **Safiya Saeed, CEO, Reach Up Youth**

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# SHEFFIELD'S CHALLENGES

As we look to Sheffield's future, it's important to recognise the challenges that stand in the way of unlocking our city's full potential. While there is much to be proud of, we must address these barriers to ensure Sheffield becomes an ever more thriving, inclusive, and sustainable city:

- Sheffield's economic disparities remain stark, with neighbourhoods near former industrial hubs facing higher unemployment, health inequalities, and limited opportunities compared to more affluent areas. Around 7 in 10 Local Super Output Areas (LSOAs, defined areas within neighbourhoods used for statistical analysis and comparison) in the city's north-east are in the most deprived 10% of LSOAs in the UK.
- Poor public transport and underinvestment further isolate these communities, especially in the north-east of the city, where up to 50% of households lack a car and bus services do not always meet the needs of residents.
- Health inequalities and poor air quality remain acute in deprived areas, demanding coordinated action on health, housing, and environment. In some parts of Sheffield, rates of depression are 40% higher than the national and Core City averages.
- SMEs can struggle to access finance and tailored support, particularly if they lack professional networks or English fluency. Navigating available grants and resources can be daunting for many, and major deals often occur outside Sheffield, limiting growth potential. Sheffield has a lower rate of business start-ups, lower business density, and fewer high-growth businesses than better-performing Core Cities.



## AT A GLANCE:

Around 7 in 10 Local Super Output Areas (LSOAs, defined areas within neighbourhoods used for statistical analysis and comparison) in the city's north-east are in the most deprived 10% of LSOAs in the UK

Up to 50% of households lack a car and bus services do not always meet the needs of residents

In some parts of Sheffield, rates of depression are 40% higher than the national and Core City averages

Sheffield has a lower rate of business start-ups, lower business density, and fewer high-growth businesses than better-performing Core Cities

75% of employers in Sheffield struggle to find candidates with the right technical and practical skills

- Although rightly proud of our reputation as The Outdoor City, we know work needs to doing to improve equity of access to good quality green space. Despite having far more green space per person than any other Core City, Sheffield residents live an average of 316m away from green spaces - just above the Core City average of 277m and the fifth-greatest distance amongst the Core Cities. Further, our waterways – that played such an important role in shaping our industrial heritage – must be enhanced and protected to support our social, economic and environmental ambitions.
- Talent retention is a challenge; despite producing skilled graduates, many leave to take advantage of promotion opportunities elsewhere, particularly in engineering and creative sectors. 75% of employers in Sheffield struggle to find candidates with the right technical and practical skills.
- Cultural and community assets are often underfunded and underused, limiting their impact on growth and cohesion. Average life satisfaction in Sheffield is consistently lower than the national average, and the average among Core Cities.
- Infrastructure gaps, especially in digital literacy and support and transport, hinder daily life and economic opportunity. Spending on services for young people in Sheffield is down 32% when comparing 2021-2022 to 2015-16.

With collective effort, we can address these challenges through targeted investment, improved inter-city and intra-city connectivity, and inclusive support – allowing Sheffield to truly flourish, offering opportunity to all and unlocking sustainable prosperity for our city.

> What I've always loved about Sheffield since moving here over 40 years ago is the way people pull together to make life better. From the trade union movement in the 1980s to community nurseries and Sure Start in the 2000s, and now in Shirecliffe, I've seen how - with the right support - communities can shape a brighter future for themselves and their children. It's truly inspiring.
>
> **Sally Pearse, Director of the Early Years Community Research Centre, Shirecliffe**

# ACCELERATING TOWARDS THE SHEFFIELD CITY GOALS

Sheffield has already taken positive steps to achieving this vision.

In recent years, leaders from Sheffield City Council and South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority have communicated extensively with Sheffield's communities to help inform plans for the city's future direction.

Recognising challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, cost-of-living crisis, climate change, and wider economic uncertainty, Sheffield's leaders have acted swiftly to lay out new economic frameworks which will deliver equitable and sustainable growth:

- The **Sheffield City Goals** were launched in 2024 as a platform for anyone and everyone to play a role in making positive change happen in Sheffield. The Goals span six categories that capture Sheffield's 2035 aspirations.
- Supporting the Goals is a ten-year **Growth Plan** adopted by Sheffield City Council in 2025. The plan sets out key missions to drive investment, grow high-value sectors, and position Sheffield as an international hub for innovation and culture.
- To help the region capitalise on its status as the UK's first Investment Zone, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority published its **Local Growth Plan** in late 2025. As well as putting a spotlight on investment opportunities in nearby Barnsley, and the rebirth of Doncaster Airport as South Yorkshire Airport City, the Plan emphasises the vital role of Sheffield's City Centre, Innovation Spine, and Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District in driving economic growth in the region. It aims to invest in the foundations of place and neighbourhoods that attract talent, remove barriers to opportunity, and build resilience into South Yorkshire's economy.

Sheffield Pride of Place Partnership's long-term ambitions aim to align with these consultations, and help Sheffield accelerate towards and beyond these goals. Our work is centred around harnessing the best of business to help Sheffield feel confident in its strengths, and to support local people in addressing local challenges.

**A CREATIVE & ENTREPRENEURIAL SHEFFIELD**
Where we all have opportunities to invent, make, create and build in ways that grow shared prosperity, create high-quality jobs and enrich our communities and ourselves.

**A GREEN & RESILIENT SHEFFIELD**
Where we all act urgently on the climate and environmental crisis, prepare for a changing future, and prioritise the health and wellbeing of our city's people and nature.

**A SHEFFIELD OF THRIVING COMMUNITIES**
Where we all belong to welcoming communities that care for one another, help us live safe and fulfilling lives and share equitably in the city's success.

**A CONNECTED SHEFFIELD**
Where we all have opportunities to form lasting, positive relationships in our neighbourhoods and across the city, through technology, great transport and common causes.

**A CARING & SAFE SHEFFIELD**
Where all our voices are heard and acted on equally, and we feel the respect and celebration of each other's histories, heritage and cultures across the city.

**A SHEFFIELD FOR ALL GENERATIONS**
Where all generations can flourish today while remaining hopeful about the future, free from poverty and oppression and regardless of background.

**If you're doing something that moves us towards the goals, we'd love to hear about it.**





# SHEFFIELD IN 2035: OUR VISION

Our vision lays out how we believe, through collaboration and partnerships, we can:

- accelerate Sheffield's **economic growth**,
- drive **greater social mobility** for more local people, and
- ensure Sheffield's future is underpinned by increasingly **resilient infrastructure**.

By 2035, we will be a city that inspires, a place where innovation and connection create an inclusive and sustainable future for every resident. As the UK's first City of Sanctuary, we will remain a welcoming home for all, celebrating diversity and fostering a sense of belonging for both residents and businesses.

Our commitment to people means investing in skills and education so every resident can thrive, and more people can be part of Sheffield's strengths in advanced manufacturing, health innovation, digital technology, and clean energy. We will nurture community wealth by championing small businesses and supporting local talent. We will inspire, inform, and empower residents to fulfil their potential and access fulfilling, productive, high-quality jobs.

Our universities, business parks, and institutions like the British Business Bank will anchor us as a hub for enterprise and growth. We will honour our industrial heritage while leading in cutting-edge technology. Our Olympic Legacy Park will lead in integrating sport, health innovation, and economic growth, driving investment and improving lives. Incubators and accelerators will emerge from 'the Don Valley Growth Corridor', attracting capital to diversify our economy and fuel high-growth businesses.

Companies will invest in Sheffield, prospering in a supportive environment fuelled by streamlined regulation and a talented workforce – sourced from all of our district centres – developed through our leading universities and skills investment. Our city will be connected through affordable, sustainable transport and digital infrastructure that empowers everyone.

The Government will see Sheffield as a key partner for developing innovative projects and initiatives that can benefit everyone in the UK. They will be inspired by the city's unique assets and networks, using our expertise to inform national strategies.

We will proudly remain The Outdoor City, redefining urban life by helping more of our residents and visitors to enjoy Sheffield's green spaces, like Endcliffe Park, Grenoside Woods, Rivelin Valley, and Wharncliffe Side. As the gateway to the Peak District, access to nature will be woven into every corner of the city, enhancing health and wellbeing, strengthening communities, and contributing to our Net-Zero Carbon goals.

Sheffield's thriving cultural scene and incredible creative heritage will be open to all. Grassroots creativity in Burngreave, world-class arts institutions like the Sheffield Theatres, food destinations like Peddler and Cambridge Street Collective, and iconic music events and venues such as Tramlines Festival and Yellow Arch Studios – all will inspire communities and celebrate our city's rich diversity. Culture will be for all and will thrive across our city.

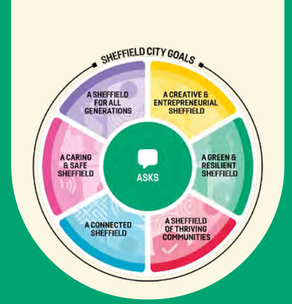
By 2035, Sheffield will be a healthier, fairer, and more prosperous city where everyone has access to opportunities to move forward - through education, employment, or enterprise - where businesses flourish, residents thrive, culture connects, and urban adventure meets industrial heritage.

# PROSPERING THROUGH PARTNERSHIP: UNLOCKING SHEFFIELD'S POTENTIAL BY 2035

By 2035, Sheffield will be a city where inclusive growth is real for every resident, business, and neighbourhood.

This is a healthier, fairer, and more prosperous Sheffield with a national reputation for innovation, resilience, and community-led growth. A city where businesses and people invest, expand, and stay for the long-term; where opportunity, creativity, and quality of life are shared by all.

The Pride of Place Partnership has widely engaged stakeholders across the city and identified the following interventions that will most positively impact Sheffield.




Economy

## 1 De-risking capital and championing city investment

*Sheffield is open for business and investment.*

**Ask:** We ask government and institutional investors to collaborate with us to de-risk capital investment into Sheffield, piloting innovative approaches. We ask partners to help accelerate project delivery and increase the flow of private finance, making Sheffield the national standard-setter for investment confidence and growth.

**Key outcomes by 2035:** A *£7.6bn uplift* in GVA (from c. £16bn in 2022), *6,500 new businesses*, an *additional £2.2bn per year* to the UK economy, and a city that sets the standard for de-risking and delivering investment. Sheffield will be known as a city where businesses can invest, expand, and stay for the long-term.

Economy

## 2 Long-term investment in SME growth

*Sheffield is a city of makers, innovators, and entrepreneurs.*

**Ask:** We call on relevant government departments to prioritise sustaining SME stock, through long-term investment into tailored SME support – including advice, finance, and innovation programmes. We ask partners to help expand Sheffield's SME base, improve survival rates, and increase high-value jobs and R&D investment.

**Key outcomes by 2035:** At least *6,500 more SMEs*, R&D investment tripled to *£1.1bn*, and a *£2.2bn annual uplift* in productivity. Our city will be a national leader in SME retention and growth, with a regulatory and support environment that enables businesses not just to start, but to thrive for the long-term.





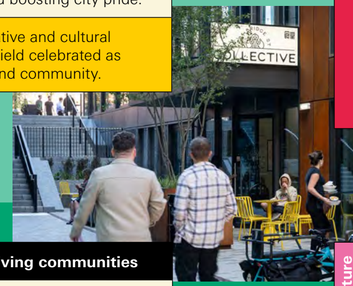
Economy

## 3 Championing culture and heritage

*Sheffield's culture and heritage are engines of renewal.*

**Ask:** We ask government and local and national businesses to advocate for dedicated investment and support for Sheffield's cultural and heritage sector, including funding for festivals, creative spaces, and heritage asset revitalisation. We ask partners to help put culture at the centre of Sheffield's growth, attracting talent and boosting city pride.

**Key outcomes by 2035:** Our creative and cultural economy will *double in size*, with Sheffield celebrated as a leading UK city for creativity, pride, and community.




© Pete Hill

Social Mobility

## 4 Education, employment, and skills

*Sheffield invests in our most important asset – our people.*

**Ask:** We call for long-term, devolved funding and policy support for skills provision at every stage – from early years to adult training – targeting growth sectors and reducing youth unemployment. We ask government, employers, and education partners to scale up employability programmes and support inclusive career pathways.

**Key outcomes by 2035:** *30,000 more* Sheffielders will have higher-level skills, *33,000 new* higher-value jobs will be created, and youth unemployment and NEET rates will fall below national averages, ensuring every resident can access opportunity and prosperity.

Social Mobility / Economy

## 5 Place-based investment for thriving communities

*Sheffield grows neighbourhoods together.*

**Ask:** We call on government and local and national businesses to work with us on a city-wide Community Accelerator programme, seeking flexible, long-term government and private support to regenerate Sheffield's communities. We ask partners to accelerate neighbourhood renewal, support local businesses, and create public spaces that foster pride and wellbeing, citywide.

**Key outcomes by 2035:** Up to *36,000 new homes* delivered, every neighbourhood sharing in prosperity, and Sheffield recognised as a national exemplar for place-based, community-led growth.

Infrastructure

## 6 Mass transit and connected neighbourhoods

*Sheffield is a city on the move.*

**Ask:** We call on relevant government departments to supercharge investment into zero-emission mass transit infrastructure – buses, tram upgrades, and active travel routes – as well as stronger rail links, connecting all parts of Sheffield, unlocking new housing, creating inter-city links and advancing inclusive economic growth.

**Key outcomes by 2035:** A *modern, integrated mass transit system* will connect every corner of our city, with improved inter-city connectivity also supporting business growth across Sheffield's district centres.

# ECONOMY: DRIVING SHEFFIELD'S GROWTH

## PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:

Position Sheffield as a destination for inward investment to accelerate regional economic growth and drive social prosperity

## SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES:

1. **Support:** Equip businesses to build resilience and unlock potential.
2. **Celebrate:** Champion Sheffield's creative, cultural, and manufacturing assets to attract investment.
3. **Unblock:** Remove barriers to growth, enabling access to resources, talent pipelines, and supportive ecosystems.

## RELATED CITY GOALS:

- A creative & entrepreneurial Sheffield
- A green & resilient Sheffield
- A Sheffield of thriving communities

## RELATED ASKS:

1. De-risking capital and championing city investment
2. Long-term investment in SME growth
3. Championing culture and heritage
5. Place-based investment for thriving communities

## CREATIVE, ENTREPRENEURIAL, INNOVATIVE

Sheffield is a city of creators, makers, and innovators—a place with ambition and resilience at its core. From our industrial roots to our status as a hub for advanced manufacturing, health, technology, and culture, Sheffield has consistently adapted to changing times. With a growing economy valued at £15.7bn, a dynamic entrepreneurial and start-up base demonstrating economic momentum, a set of City Goals that act as a 'North Star' for our city, and a recently adopted Growth Plan, Sheffield is open for business.

Sheffield's strengths are many. We were recently recognised as the best place in Britain to start a business. We're home to world-class assets like the University of Sheffield's AMRC, the Don Valley Growth Corridor, two exceptional universities with over 60,000 students, and cultural assets such as the Crucible Theatre and Millennium Gallery.

Our green spaces and proximity to the Peak District make us 'The Outdoor City,' blending urban vibrancy with natural beauty. The Olympic Legacy Park, English Institute of Sport, and teams like the Sheffield Eagles and Sheffield Sharks (and of course our city's famous football teams) create world-class opportunities for athletes and generate economic activity through events and employment.

Business Sheffield offers free advice, workshops, and support for businesses at every stage, while Invest Sheffield and South Yorkshire's Investment Zone help companies relocate or expand here. By championing our heritage, creativity, and people on a national and global stage, we can realise Sheffield's full potential.

© Peter Jarr

## MAKING SHEFFIELD A BETTER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS

Although Sheffield is home to diverse and thriving innovators, compared to other UK cities such as Manchester and Leeds, our ecosystem remains underdeveloped, leaving many businesses unable to scale effectively.

Access to finance remains a persistent barrier for SMEs, which affects start-ups looking to scale up quickly, particularly at the commercialisation stage. To help them excel and grow further, Sheffield's businesses need seamless runways for investment that are accessible and supportive. They need awareness and access to appropriate capital solutions that are risk-weighted to our local economic needs. And they need community infrastructure that fosters local wealth creation.

To further support start-ups and high-growth businesses, we recognise the importance of creating a business-friendly environment and addressing regulatory complexity. Simplifying licensing, permits, and compliance requirements will reduce administrative burdens on businesses, enabling them to focus on growth and innovation. Programmes like the Future Sheffield Transformation Programme are already modernising customer-facing services, but there is an opportunity to go further – introducing streamlined processes that accelerate investment decisions and reduce barriers for entrepreneurs.

By adopting a proactive stance on regulation, Sheffield can align with national priorities outlined in the UK Innovation Strategy, which emphasises reducing barriers to innovation as a critical driver of economic growth. There are clear opportunities to complement existing initiatives like Invest Sheffield, making it easier for businesses to navigate local requirements while fostering a culture of entrepreneurship.

**Cambridge Street Collective is a vibrant food hall and cultural hub in Sheffield, officially opening in May 2024 as part of the city's £470m Heart of the City regeneration project. The venue combines restored historic buildings with a contemporary structure featuring Europe's largest purpose-built food hall. Run by Blend Family, the collective hosts around 20 independent food vendors offering diverse global cuisines, and a theatrical cookery school with live demonstrations and masterclasses. It's a community-focused social destination, supporting local food entrepreneurs and creating a lively space for eating, socialising, and enjoying culture, contributing significantly to Sheffield's evolving city centre and culinary scene**

## HIGH GROWTH: DRIVING INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY

Start-ups and high-growth businesses are central to Sheffield's future, driving innovation, attracting investment, and creating high-value jobs. In 2023, South Yorkshire saw record start-up activity, with over 600 new tech firms and 4,588 tech companies in the region.

Sheffield Technology Parks saw five start-ups secure over £1.2 million in investment in Summer 2023, including health-tech innovators like Hero of Health and sustainable food pioneers like Future Greens. Twinkl offers another glittering example of Sheffield's cutting-edge potential, having scaled from an SME to a global leader in edtech.

The Don Valley Growth Corridor connects key innovation clusters. Supported by South Yorkshire Investment Zone status, it integrates labs, incubation hubs, housing, and public realm improvements. The Growth Corridor can also attract significant inward investment, linking innovative businesses with scale-up opportunities, positioning Sheffield at the forefront of the government's vision for the next industrial revolution.

To further support high-growth businesses, we must unlock regulatory constraints, derisk capital, and streamline planning and licensing. Sheffield has a proud history in nurturing entrepreneurial spark, but there's potential to go further in accelerating investment and reducing barriers for entrepreneurs.

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## THE FOUNDATIONAL ECONOMY: BUILDING LOCAL WEALTH

While high-growth businesses drive innovation, Sheffield's foundational economy –shops, cafes, care providers, and tradespeople – is critical to our city and our communities. These businesses form the backbone of daily life, providing jobs and fostering local pride. Investing in district centres – such as Abbeydale Road, Ecclesall Road, Firth Park, Gleadless, Hillsborough, Spital Hill, Staniforth Road, and Woodseats – creates vibrant neighbourhoods, encourages local spending, and keeps wealth circulating locally.

Initiatives like Heeley Trust show how community ownership can revitalise neighbourhood economies, while the Economic Recovery Fund has enhanced district centres through collaboration. To empower our foundational economy, we must improve access to affordable finance, educate businesses for resilience, and ensure cashflow stays within the city.

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## CULTURE: A CATALYST FOR GROWTH

South Yorkshire, with Sheffield at its cultural heart, stands out nationally for its dynamic and expanding creative industries. The region's cultural economy – spanning film and screen, music and festivals, digital media and gaming – is valued at around £2bn GVA. Between 2017 and 2022, Sheffield experienced a remarkable average employment growth rate of 6% year-on-year in the cultural and creative sector, increasing from 7,890 to 10,580 jobs. During this period, GVA grew even faster, at about 20% annually, rising from £398m to just under £1bn, highlighting rising productivity within the sector.

Sheffield is home to nationally and internationally recognised cultural institutions and creative companies. Warp Films, a Sheffield-born production company, gained global prominence with its 2025 Emmy-winning Netflix series Adolescence, which secured eight awards including Best Limited Series. The Showroom Cinema, a Sheffield cultural staple, supports film education and community engagement, hosting renowned events like the Sheffield Film Festival and the BFI Film Academy.

The city's cultural landscape is further enriched by a vibrant, diverse arts scene with notable figures such as Pete McKee, Luke Horton, Kid Acne, Marcus Methos, Trik09, Peachzz, Jo Peel, and Rob Lee contributing to Sheffield's reputation as a creative hub. Beyond these individual artists and producers, the area thrives on strong networks like the South Yorkshire Culture and Creative Industries Network and the South Yorkshire Filmmakers Network, which foster collaboration and innovation.

Sheffield's cultural ecosystem is underpinned by a diverse and skilled workforce of approximately 25,000 creatives, with robust links to local universities like the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University, alongside Sheffield College, all nurturing the next generation of talent. Signature festivals such as Tramlines, Sheffield DocFest, and Off the Shelf Festival of Words further showcase the city's rich cultural offerings, contributing significant social and economic benefits across the region.

Coordinated policy and practice can help to further grow Sheffield's reputation for creative and cultural excellence. Our city's venues, employers, educators and cultural organisations are all referenced as key stakeholders in Sheffield's Culture Strategy for 2035. The Strategy sets out ways in which the sector can be ignited, accelerated, and elevated through concerted, collaborative efforts to celebrate and invest in what is a key area of strength for Sheffield.

© Sam McQueen

**Peddler was one of the first modern night markets to be established in Sheffield when it launched in 2014. What began as a small gathering of passionate street food vendors and local food lovers quickly grew in popularity to become Sheffield's best-known monthly night market event. Held in a converted industrial warehouse in the Neepsend, Peddler focuses on street food culture, music, and modern creative retailers – setting a new benchmark for vibrant, community-focused night-time markets in the city.**

**Founded by Act of Parliament in 1624, the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire has been the proud 'voice of manufacturing' in Sheffield and South Yorkshire for more than 400 years. Its role has always been to uphold the quality and reputation of Sheffield's world-renowned cutlery, steel, and manufactured products. At its heart is the Master Cutler – a leading manufacturer who speaks for industry on behalf of the region – supported by Members, Freemen, and Friends, all rooted in manufacturing. Today, the Company continues to champion innovation, quality, and the vital role of manufacturing in shaping Sheffield's global identity.**

# SOCIAL MOBILITY: UNLOCKING POTENTIAL ACROSS SHEFFIELD

## PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:

Creating Equity of Opportunity for All

## SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES:

1. **Education & Skills to Be Work Ready:**
   Create an enterprise pipeline from early years to post-16, increasing employer engagement with young people, carers and educators.
2. **Inclusive Access to Work & Good Jobs:**
   Create more accessible pathways for people entering or returning to work through promoting good work and inclusive recruitment practices.
3. **Thriving & Progressing in Work:**
   Celebrate, develop and promote initiatives that support positive mental wellbeing and enable people to stay and thrive in the workplace.

## RELATED CITY GOALS:

- A creative & entrepreneurial Sheffield
- A Sheffield of thriving communities
- A caring and safe Sheffield
- A Sheffield for all generations

## RELATED ASKS:

- 4 Education, employment, and skills
- 5 Place-based investment for thriving communities

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## A CITY OF TALENT AND AMBITION

From entrepreneurial communities to two exceptional universities, Sheffield's potential is undeniable. The Sheffield Growth Plan recognises that tackling inequality and improving access to education and skills are essential for an inclusive economy. We aim to build on this foundation by removing barriers to opportunity, so all residents can access education, training, and better jobs, in line with the city's mission-led growth strategy.

Sheffield has a rich and diverse network of organisations and initiatives that make opportunities accessible for local people. The 'See It Be It' campaign is a national exemplar, connecting over 16,000 young people annually with local employers through visits, talks, and competitions like the BiG Challenge. Recognised by the Social Mobility List 2024, it shows how collaboration can create real opportunities.

Opportunity Sheffield supports residents at every labour market stage, from overcoming barriers to progressing in work. Programmes like Skills & Employability South Yorkshire (SESY) offer tailored support for those economically inactive, including green jobs and sector-specific training.

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SOCIAL MOBILITY: UNLOCKING POTENTIAL ACROSS SHEFFIELD

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## COMMITTING TO FAIRNESS ACROSS OUR CITY

Yet, despite the inspiring efforts of many of the city's people and organisations to help address social mobility, for many of our communities, opportunity can feel out of reach. Around 1 in 4 people live in poverty, with neighbourhoods in formerly industrial areas often ranking amongst the most deprived in England. In a city where talent is evenly spread but opportunity is not, we must ensure everyone, regardless of background, can fulfil their potential.

Wealthier areas like Ecclesall enjoy better life expectancy and opportunities than neighbourhoods such as Page Hall and Burngreave. The "Fairness on the 83" film and Sheffield Fairness Commission powerfully highlighted how life expectancy drops by a decade along the No. 83 bus route - a pattern which has remained unchanged for 30 years.

There's also a significant higher education participation gap. If low-participation areas matched a 50% rate, 2,500 more students could enter university each year. Structural inequalities in the labour market continue to affect marginalised groups, especially ethnic minority/global majority communities, compounded by social clustering.

Tackling digital exclusion, health inequalities, and financial instability is vital for unlocking Sheffield's full potential, and we know businesses and other employers have a crucial role to play. By supporting an enterprise pipeline, inclusive access to work, and thriving workplaces, we can build a comprehensive framework for better social mobility across Sheffield.

This integrated approach can help our city address systemic barriers and cultivate greater collaboration among community anchors, educational institutions, and local businesses. Together, we can unlock the potential of our diverse population, ensuring every resident has opportunities to thrive and contribute to a vibrant, equitable city.

### A City Committed to Change

Education is central to improving social mobility. The Sheffield College's Ahead programmes equip students with employability skills through real-world experiences. Regional initiatives like the Yorkshire Policy Innovation Partnership (YPIP), funded by UK Research & Innovation, support projects that address systemic inequalities and place communities at the heart of decision-making.

We must expand employer engagement in schools and communities, especially in deprived areas, and embed enterprise education at all stages. This will build a pipeline of young people with the skills and confidence to succeed.





### Breaking Down Barriers

Barriers to opportunity extend into employment and workplace culture. Young people who are NEET face cycles of deprivation. The Whole Family Approach works collaboratively with families to address financial instability, health, housing, and digital exclusion, ensuring young people receive tailored support to re-engage with education or work.

Supporting older generations through digital literacy can also bridge technology gaps and fosters intergenerational learning. Strengthening partnerships between community anchors, schools, and employers is vital for delivering mentoring, skills training, and mental health support.

The Race Equality Partnership for Sheffield (REPS) is an active, collaborative network of people and organisations with a shared aim to make Sheffield an anti-racist city. REPS provides space to share learnings, hold each other to account, and monitor our city's progress towards fulfilling all recommendations put forward by the Sheffield Race Equality Commission.

### Working Together to Build Resilience

The Centre for Collaboration in Community Connectedness (C4), a £10 million UKRI-funded initiative, brings together researchers, policymakers, and community groups to tackle systemic inequalities and build resilient communities. Expanding existing initiatives and strengthening partnerships with schools, colleges, universities and employers will unlock potential at every stage, directly supporting Sheffield's economic growth and social mobility goals.

### The Role of Community Anchors

Community anchors like SOAR, SADACCA, and Fir Vale Community Centre are deeply rooted in neighbourhoods, providing hyper-local support skills training, digital skills, health, and employment pathways. Heeley Trust's innovative community business models tackle youth unemployment and systemic issues.

Despite their impact, these organisations are underfunded. Strengthening this network will help address health inequalities, digital exclusion, and financial instability at a local level. Integrating health interventions with employability programmes, and supporting intergenerational learning, will amplify their impact.

This aligns with Sheffield's City Goals – creating caring communities, valuing diversity, and ensuring every resident has access to learning and good jobs. Initiatives such as the Whole Family Approach, 'See It Be It' in Sheffield and skills pathways address systemic barriers in left-behind communities and foster stronger connections between education providers and employers. Leveraging the expertise and skills of Sheffield's businesses – including through skilled volunteering and bespoke strategic support – can help to further support Sheffield's community ecosystem.

© Sam Mc Ilfatrick

### Tackling Health Inequality

The NHS advances social mobility by tackling health inequalities that limit education and work opportunities. Through the Fairer Healthier Sheffield Plan, NHS teams collaborate with community organisations on eight key blocks of change, including tackling discrimination, enabling everyone to fulfil their potential, and creating healthy communities.

Integrating health interventions with education and employment pathways ensures health inequalities no longer block opportunity. Expanding inclusive NHS recruitment and linking healthcare access with skills training will help create a healthier, more equitable city.

NHS

# INFRASTRUCTURE: BUILDING FOUNDATIONS FOR SHEFFIELD'S FUTURE

## PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:

Sheffield is a healthy and connected city where people and business thrive through cleaner air, reliable transport, and the capability to adapt to the climate crisis, and thrive in a digital age

## SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES:

**Enhancing Green Infrastructure**
All our citizens have equity of access to green space for outdoor wellbeing, with people empowered to be nature champions and environmental stewards.

**Advocate for Transport Connectivity**
The city's transport network is inclusive, connected, cleaner, and enables our people to access opportunities and resources to prosper.

**Digital Inclusion**
Everyone has access to digital skills, affordable and quality connectivity, and continually fit-for-purpose technology.

## RELATED CITY GOALS:

- A green & resilient Sheffield
- A Sheffield of thriving communities
- A connected Sheffield
- A Sheffield for all generations
- A caring and safe Sheffield

## RELATED ASKS:

6 Mass transit and connected neighbourhoods

**Established in 1991, The Foundry Climbing Centre is the UK's oldest dedicated indoor climbing facility and a cornerstone of Sheffield's climbing scene. Founded by local climbers, it changed indoor climbing in the UK when it opened by pioneering the use of plastic bouldering holds instead of traditional wooden grips. One of its signature features, the "Wave" bouldering wall, offer climbers a true-to-nature climbing experience unlike any flat wooden panel.**

## BUILDING A CONNECTED SHEFFIELD

Infrastructure is the foundation upon which Sheffield's ambitions for social mobility and economic transformation are built. A city's true strength is measured by how well it connects people to each other and to the opportunities that transform lives – through the places they live, the journeys they make, and the resources they can access.

In Sheffield, infrastructure is much more than physical assets. It is the heart of opportunity and an active enabler of change. From green spaces that support wellbeing and climate resilience, public transport that connects talent to jobs and empowers neighbourhoods, to digital skills hubs unlocking new ways of learning, working, and belonging – these are the things that will breathe life into every community.

Our challenge, and greatest opportunity, is to mobilise investment, partnership, and innovation so every neighbourhood and community – longstanding or newly arrived – benefits from the connective of a healthy, resilient, and future-ready city.

We are building a Sheffield where:

- Clean, reliable public transport links every community to the jobs, learning, care, and culture that unlock everyday and lifechanging opportunities, ensuring no one has to compromise on affordable access or personal safety in their journeys.
- Digital inclusion is a right, not a postcode lottery. Residents everywhere can learn, work, communicate, and participate as technology evolves, ensuring no one is left behind when it comes to opportunity.
- Green corridors, parks, and blue spaces weave through every community, making wellbeing, climate resilience, and the outdoors part of everyday life – not just for some, but for all. Where every resident, regardless of background, knows clean air, nature, and a place to breathe are part of their neighbourhood.

© David Bailey Photography

Despite Sheffield being recognised as one of the greenest cities in the UK, with a proud investment in public transport, many of our residents continue to face real barriers that risk leaving our city divided between those who can access opportunity and those who can't:

- Only 28% of Sheffield's residents can reach the city centre by public transport within 30 minutes.
- Despite having far more green space per person than any other Core City, Sheffield residents live an average of 316m away from green spaces - just above the Core City average of 277m, and the fifth-greatest distance amongst the Core Cities.
- Digital poverty isolates people as education and work move rapidly online.
- Though concerted efforts have been made to improve air quality, parts of the city continue to fall short of what we know residents deserve.
- Congestion and non-decent homes hold back neighbourhoods and chip away at Sheffield's full potential.

These challenges are not just inconvenient; they create real consequences for health, education, employment, and living.

We will push hard for fast, joined-up investment in Sheffield's zero-emission mass transit – buses, tram upgrades, and active travel routes – that links every neighbourhood, business hub, and new development. This is about unlocking new homes, growing our economy, and building a greener, healthier city that works for everyone.



At the same time, we will champion a seamless infrastructure network that brings together clean transport, digital connection, and green spaces – making sure opportunity, wellbeing, and social mobility reach every corner of Sheffield. Together, we will build a future-ready city where no community gets left behind and where smart infrastructure drives shared success for all. Sheffield's track record speaks clearly: our transformative Supertram, our growing network of green corridors, our community-driven rewilding projects, and innovative digital inclusion programmes are not just investments; they are catalysts for public health, business resilience, and community pride.

These projects demonstrate the multiplier effect that comes from infrastructure that is designed and delivered with communities at the heart. When infrastructure works, it generates tangible economic, social, and environmental returns.

But to truly realise Sheffield's potential, we must secure bold, sustained, integrated investment pipelines that join housing, transport, green infrastructure, and digital transformation at every stage – from planning and design through to delivery and maintenance.

Infrastructure is the through-line in Sheffield's story of transformation. If we are serious about inclusion, equity, and opportunity for all residents, then the foundations we build need to be class-leading, accessible to everyone across every part of the city.

© Sam McQueen

The influence of infrastructure stretches across all pillars of our vision:

- Economic Growth: Reliable transport systems connect workers to jobs, link businesses to supply chains, and attract inward investment. Digital infrastructure supports innovation, remote working and connectivity, opening the door to new industries. Green infrastructure improves public health, reducing costs and boosting productivity.
- Social Mobility: Digital skills close the opportunity gap, green space improves mental health and social cohesion, and mass transit links disadvantaged neighbourhoods to education and employment, shrinking practical barriers and widening horizons.
- Health and Wellbeing: Green and blue infrastructure enhances air quality and supports active lifestyles. Walking, wheeling, and cycling networks reduce pollution and improve physical fitness. Digital inclusion supports access to health information and services.
- Community Pride and Identity: Infrastructure investments that reflect local heritage, culture, and community voice create places where people want to live, work, and stay.

Sheffield is ready to lead. With the right partners, the right funding, and the right ambition, we will build infrastructure that works harder and smarter – bridging divides, unlocking potential, and transforming lives across the city.

Together, we can lay the foundations for a Sheffield that belongs to everyone.

# JOIN US TO MAKE SHEFFIELD'S FUTURE BETTER

This Prospectus is the result of extensive collaboration with a diverse range of existing partners across Sheffield's districts. We are committed to continuing this spirit of working together – convening, collaborating, and co-designing solutions with local stakeholders.

Our call to government, to investors, to employers, and to anchor institutions is clear: partner with us to champion Sheffield as the UK's demonstrator for truly joined-up, place-based infrastructure investment that flows from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, supporting the people who live and work here every day.

Since launching the Sheffield Pride of Place Partnership, we have:

- Delivered more than 503 interventions/ projects across Sheffield
- Connected with and benefited 90+ voluntary organisations
- Established 600 employers in the Sheffield Business Together network
- Engaged thousands of young people in educational outreach through 'See it Be it'
- Provided in-kind value to the city in excess of £1m

From 2026, we plan to make discretionary, impact-focused funding available to key Sheffield community organisations.

Thanks to generous financial contributions from Partnership members, we plan to invest in initiatives that help our city progress towards the Sheffield City Goals.

We will continue to work closely with local people and stakeholders to identify the best opportunities to build local resilience and underpin good ideas that work for Sheffielders.

It is through these strong, collective relationships that we will achieve the ambitious goals set out in this Prospectus, ensuring growth and opportunity are inclusive for every resident, business, and neighbourhood. Many stakeholders have shaped this vision, and their ongoing involvement will be key to turning it into reality.

Get in touch with us if you would like to combine energies and contribute additional funding that can make a lasting difference to local lives.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire
Sheffield Theatres

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Get in touch with us if you would like to combine energies and contribute additional funding that can make a lasting difference to local lives.

# WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

**Key outcomes by 2035:**

- A *£7.6bn uplift* in GVA (from c. £16bn in 2022), *6,500 new businesses*, an *additional £2.2bn per year* to the UK economy, and a city that sets the standard for de-risking and delivering investment. Sheffield will be known as a city where businesses can invest, expand, and stay for the long-term.
- At least *6,500 more SMEs*, R&D investment tripled to *£1.1bn*, and a *£2.2bn annual uplift* in productivity. Our city will be a national leader in SME retention and growth, with a regulatory and support environment that enables businesses not just to start, but to thrive for the long-term.
- Our creative and cultural economy will *double in size*, with Sheffield celebrated as a leading UK city for creativity, pride, and community.
- *30,000 more* Sheffielders will have higher-level skills, *33,000 new* higher-value jobs will be created, and youth unemployment and NEET rates will fall below national averages, ensuring every resident can access opportunity and prosperity.
- Up to *36,000 new homes* delivered, every neighbourhood sharing in prosperity, and Sheffield recognised as a national exemplar for place-based, community-led growth.
- A *modern, integrated mass transit system* will connect every corner of our city, with improved inter-city connectivity also supporting business growth across Sheffield's district centres.

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

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